

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SAM-01 NIC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SR-02 ORM-01 IO-10 EB-07 OMB-01

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R 040900Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1198

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1463

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR; SP; CU

SUBJECT: SPANISH-CUBAN RELATIONS

1. MFA DIRECTOR CUBAN AND CARIBBEAN AFFAIRS (CUADRA) OUTLINED FOR EMBOFF RECENT STEPS IN EFFORTS OF SPAIN AND CUBA NORMALIZE RELATIONS FOLLOWING INITIATIVE BY CASTRO SEVERAL MONTHS AGO. HE CONFIRMED PRESS REPORTS THAT EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS TO TAKE PLACE IN COMING MONTHS.

2. CUADRA SAID WHILE NOTHING WAS WRITTEN IN ANY FORMAL WAY, CASTRO MADE STRONG PERSONAL BID FOR IMPORVED RELATIONS TO SPAIN'S COMMERCE MINISTER NEMESIO FERNANDEZ-CUESTA DURING LATTER'S VISIT TO CUBA LAST DECEMBER. CASTRO MADE HIS INTENTION CLEARER IN JANUARY WHEN HE SENT VICE PRIME MINISTER FOR FOREIGN RELATIONS CARLOS RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ, WHOM CUADRA LABELED AS "MOSCOW'S MAN", TO SPAIN IN COURSE OF EUROPEAN ITINERARY WHICH
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INCLUDED SUBSEQUENT VISITS BY RIDRIGUEZ TO PARIS AND

MOSCOW.

3. DIRECTOR GENERAL OF EUROPEAN POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF CUBAN MFA (BOZA) MADE FOLLOW-UP VISIT TO MADRID WEEK OF FEB 17 TO DISCUSS THREE OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS WHICH SPAIN HAS CONSIDERED A SINE QUA NON FOR RESOLUTION BEFORE EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS CAN TAKE PLACE:

A. PROBLEM OF SPANISH POLITICAL PRISONERS IN CUBA.

CUADRA SAYS THEY AMOUNTED TO FIVE, FOUR OF WHICH WERE RELEASED MAR 1, 1975. FIFTH A PROBLEM CASE BECAUSE OF MENTAL ILLNESS, WHICH BOTH COUNTRIES AGREE WILL BE REFERRED FOR APPROPRIATE PSYCHIATRIC CARE.

B. PROBLEM OF SPANISH CITIZENS PROHIBITED FROM LEAVING CUBA. CUADRA SAID THIS IS NOW LARGELY RESOLVED TO SPAIN'S SATISFACTIONS.

C. THIRD PROBLEM RELATES TO INDEMNIFICATION FOR PROPERTY OF SPANISH CITIZENS LIVING IN CUBA. CUADRA SAID THIS IS ENORMOUSLY COMPLICATED, SINCE IT PERTAINS TO LARGE ENTERPRISES, SMALL BUSINESS, AND PERSONAL PROPERTY HOLDINGS OF VARYING SIZE, AND INVOLVES ESTABLISHING AGREED CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PROPERTY CONFISCATED. (AS AN ASIDE, CUADRA SAID CASTRO HAD EVEN NATIONALIZED THE "BOOTBLACK" BUSINESS, SO THAT MUCH REMAINS TO BE WORKED OUT.) THEREFORE, SPAIN IS SENDING A "TECHNICAL" MISSION TO CUBA ABOUT APR 15 TO NEGOTIATE ON INDEMNIFICATION. WHEN SUFFICIENT PROGRESS IS MADE AND IT IS CLEAR TO SPANISH THAT RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM IS WELL ALONG, SPAIN WILL AGREE TO EXCHANGE AMBASSADORS.

4. REGARDING SPAIN'S NEW AMBASSADOR, CUADRA SAID THAT IT WAS "POSSIBLE" ENRIQUE SUAREZ DE PUGA, CURRENTLY SPAIN'S OBSERVER TO OAS IN WASHINGTON, MIGHT BE APPOINTED, BUT CONTRARY TO PRESS REPORTS, NO DEFINITIVE DECISION HAD BEEN MADE. (HE PROVIDED NO INFORMATION ON POSSIBLE CUBAN AMBASSADOR, THOUGH RECENT PRESS REPORTS SAY CUBA'S NOMINEE, CURRENT CHARGE GUSTAVO MAZORRA HERNANDEZ, HAS BEEN REJECTED BY GOS. ANOTHER MFA OFFICIAL CONCERNED WITH CUBAN AFFAIRS (FERNANDEZ SHAW) TOLD EMBOFF THAT RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS AT AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL WOULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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BE ACCOMPANIED BY SIZEABLE INCREASE IN CUBAN STAFF HERE.)

5. COMMENT: CUADRA EMPHASIZED GREAT IMPORTANCE SPAIN ATTACHES TO LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS IN GENERAL, AND IN PARTICULAR THOSE WITH CUBA WHERE HE SAID THERE HAS BEEN LARGE IMMIGRATION OF SPANIARDS, AND SPANISH PRIVATE INVESTMENT, EVEN SINCE CUBAN INDEPENDENCE. HE REFERRED TO CARLOS RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ AS DIED-IN-WOOL COMMUNIST,

NOTING, HOWEVER, THAT SPAIN HAD NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT HIM
OR TYPE OF COMMUNISM HE REPRESENTED. STILL, CASTRO,
HE SURMISED, WAS ACTING IN CUBA'S HIGHER INTEREST AND
AS WELL FROM SOME INNER SENTIMENT FOR SPAIN DERIVING
FROM FAMILY TIES IN ASTURIAS REGION.
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